

**Ravalli County Planning Board
Meeting Minutes for March 15, 2006
3:00 p.m.
Commissioners Meeting Room, 215 S. 4th Street, Hamilton, Montana**

Public Hearing

Consideration of Old Corvallis Road Area 3 Neighborhood Plan as an amendment to the Growth Policy

Plat Evaluation

Sunnyside Orchards Block 4, Lots 14 & 15, AP (K & L Development) Major Subdivision

1. Call to order: Dan Huls

Dan called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

2. Roll Call (See Attachment A, Roll Call Sheet)

(A) Members

Ben Hillicoss (present)
Dan Huls (present)
Frankie Laible (present)
Roger Linhart (present)
Chip Pigman (not present – excused)
Tom Ruffatto (not present – excused)
Les Rutledge (present)
Lori Schallenberger (present)
Garry Shook (present)
Gary Zebrowski (present)

(B) Staff Present

Karen Hughes
Benjamin Howell
John Lavey
Jennifer DeGroot
James McCubbin, Deputy County Attorney

3. Approval of Minutes – March 1, 2006 – Regular Meeting Minutes

Dan asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes. There were none. The minutes were approved as read.

4. Amendments to the Agenda

There were none.

5. **Correspondence**

Gary Zebrowski distributed a sheet of information regarding the OCR3 plan. (See Attachment B)

6. **Disclosure of Possible/Perceived Conflicts**

There were none.

7. **Public Hearing – Continued from March 8, 2006**

(A) **Consideration of Old Corvallis Road Area 3 Neighborhood Plan as an amendment to the Growth Policy**

(i) Three Minute Rule Waiver Requests (if any)

There were none.

(ii) Public Comment on the Neighborhood Plan

(a) Persons in Favor

Terry Walker from Hamilton spoke. He expressed an interest in a place where individuals could play community sports in town. He stated that kids have no place for baseball or softball near Hamilton. He would like to see a sports complex at the site.

John Ormiston, Vice Chairman of the Ravalli County Park Board, spoke in favor of the plan. He stated that the Park Board supports the concept of the park and recommends having no strings attached. John noted that dedicated parkland is needed in the County. The first phase of a study is being performed evaluating sites that may be used for sports complexes. At this time, there is not money to buy land specifically for sports complexes.

Sharon Shader, President of the Daly Mansion Trust, spoke in support of the plan. She said that preservation of the mansion and stock farm is important. Preserving the community character of the area is an important mission of the Trust. It is a treasure that should be protected. She advised against placing baseball fields directly adjacent to the mansion.

Grant Kier spoke regarding what a park space might look like near the mansion. He noted that this is a community plan, not a county plan, thus the purposes of the area are not the right place for a baseball field. Playing fields should be done elsewhere.

(b) Persons Opposed

There were none.

(c) Close: Public Comment

(iii) Board Deliberation on Old Corvallis Road Area 3 Neighborhood Plan

(a) Board discussion and questions

Gary Zebrowski said that the plan is a good start, and would like to see more versions of the plan to create options. He said that more public comment may be needed. The board should draft a recommendation to the County Commissioners so that County and City requirements will be met together.

Ben Hillicoss asked Karen if the approval of this plan by the County means that the land would be incorporated into Hamilton.

Karen Hughes said that adoption does not necessarily mean annexation.

Ben said that if annexed, the Ravalli County Planning Board would no longer have jurisdiction over subdivisions in the area. The growth policy, though not regulatory, does suggest that more detail in planning is acceptable. He asked that if the area is not a part of the city, and subdivisions were proposed, would the neighborhood plan in any way expedite subdivision review and would the Planning Board still have the same authority after the plan is approved?

Karen responded that no subdivisions would be expedited because of this plan. Expedited review might only be possible if zoning were in place. She noted that the Planning Board would still have legal authority to review subdivision proposals in the area.

John Horwich said that if the neighborhood plan, at this point, is a guidance document and has no regulatory powers until zoning is drafted.

Karen said that the cumulative impacts of the area will best be addressed with the preparation of zoning regulations.

James McCubbin said that the next logical step after approving the plan is a zoning resolution and subdivision regulation amendment.

Ben said that the present density would not be locked in until zoning is in place.

Karen agreed and said that ultimately the plan is a more specific guide. She noted that any zoning put in place must substantially comply with the provisions of the growth policy.

James commented that density is not a subdivision review criterion. If the area is not zoned or under a neighborhood plan and a developer proposes a subdivision, under the current criteria, then the subdivision must be reviewed relative to the current subdivision regulations.

Ben said he likes the overall plan, and is in favor in general; however, he has specific concerns about the average proposed density.

John Horwich stated that the County and City Growth Policies encourage development close to existing municipalities which are able to provide basic services. Since the OCR3 Area is close to Hamilton, it is appropriate to have a

density of three homes per acre. He noted the latest version of the plan has less density than earlier drafts. The existing sewer line constrains the amount of density, limiting dwelling units to three per acre, which is a generous lot size in relation to the surrounding area. There are many options for housing types in the area. Ten units per acre may be allowed for more flexible development and this density was the upper limit people said they could handle.

Ben said that about 80,000 more people may live in the valley in 20 years and that the Planning Board should look at density issues. He thinks they should look at high-rise condos within cities to preserve open space and agricultural space in the valley. He would prefer to see areas with significant open space and denser development rather than many one acre single-family residential lots. He thinks many people might appreciate having smaller yards and the ability to walk and bike to nearby amenities. He would like to see cluster housing and small parks proposed in the plan. He is concerned about any subsequent Neighborhood Plans not being specific enough. He would like more discussion of sustainable development in the County.

Frankie said that the neighborhood plan seems very directive-driven. She said that the next logical step is zoning and that this document would precede any discussion of sustainability.

John said that he drafts plans to be specific, so that any zoning that might follow would also be specific.

Gary said that other options should be researched so that more permanent zoning could be in place.

Les Rutledge asked what other sort of information could be included in other drafts of the OCR3 plan. The existing document has flexibility built into it that might preclude other plans. The developers will eventually decide what development will happen.

Gary wants less flexibility in development and more strict controls on the plan in the area.

Frankie responded that a Neighborhood Plan is a recommendation to developers and that is all it can be.

Les noted that the Planning Board is in favor of suggesting developments that are commensurate with cluster development design.

Ben said that many of the provisions of the plan may be too severe. He thinks that the plan should suggest to developers a certain proportion of park space to be left open per units developed.

Dan Huls noted that developers may be able to develop denser than 10 units per acre.

John responded that 10 units per acre is the maximum the plan suggests.

Lori Schallenberger asked how much a road study would cost.

John said that an engineering firm would know better the expenses associated with a road study. He said that eventually the zoning ordinance to follow could include more specific provisions. The plan provides a range of development density, not to exceed 840 units in the area as a whole. He questioned whether the Planning Board would want the plan to be more specific.

Ben remarked that the process of the Neighborhood Plan did not allow as much public input as there could have been. He suggested that they open the floor back up to the public. **Gary** agreed.

James said that members of the Planning Board could talk to whomever they want; the forum is not limited to the Planning Board public hearing.

Gary suggested that the plan not be voted on today.

Garry Shook said that the OCR3 is a good plan and the market will determine the development pattern. He feels that public comments received to date are acceptable and he is in favor of approving the plan.

Roger Linhart echoed Garry's sentiment and noted that more public comment would be OK.

Les reminded the board that the present owners of the property want to see the area preserved as open space. He said that since the Bessenyeys support the document, that is reason enough for the Planning Board to approve the plan.

Frankie reminded the board that this plan is an extension of the growth policy and suggested that the board approve it.

Ben asked the public how many of them have read the plan. Four or five people raised their hands. He further asked how many want the process to go on further. Four or five raised their hands. He asked for additional public comments or questions on the project.

Jannette McCee, Daly Mansion Trust, said that she cannot get a clear picture of what exactly the plan might be. She wanted to see a map. (The map was brought in.)

Kathleen Driscoll said that the area's proximity to the Airport might cause a problem for homes in the area.

Stewart Brandborg, Bitterrooters for Planning, made a number of comments on the plan including the need for additional information and an extensive public process.

Paul Travitz, Council on Aging, said that the sewer pump station is the main issue, and he likes the plan as it stands.

(b) Board action

Frankie made a motion to approve the Neighborhood Plan as written.

Les seconded the motion.

Ben said that the Board might want to make changes.

(c) Board Decision

The vote was called; the members voted (5–3) to approve the Old Corvallis Road Area 3 Neighborhood Plan. (See Attachment C – Vote Sheet for OCR3 Neighborhood Plan)

Dan Huls motioned to take a three minute recess.

8. **Close Public Hearing**

9. **Plat Evaluation**

(A) **Sunnyside Orchards Block 4, Lots 14 & 15, AP (K & L Development) Major Subdivision**

(i) Presentation by John Horat, Bitterroot Engineering & Design

John Horat presented the plat to the Board. He represented K & L development, who is proposing a nineteen-lot single family unit subdivision. There are no water rights on the property. Cash-in-lieu is proposed for the park dedication. A private internal road will be constructed. A sensitive species report was conducted for Shining Flat Sedge, but none was found on the property.

(ii) Public comment

There was none.

(iii) Board discussion and questions

Ben Hillicoss asked about school donations.

John Horat said that upon first conveyance, \$250 per lot shall go to the school district and \$500 per lot will be given to the fire department.

Roger asked if the developer would put in a bus pull-out area for the subdivision.

John Horat responded that oftentimes the school district prefers that the bus stop on the street so that traffic will slow behind them.

Dan asked if there would be any building envelopes.

John Horat said that some lots will be built and sold, other lots may be sold bare.

Ben Hillicoss asked about a letter from the Sheriff's department.

John Horat said they had not received one.

10. Communications from Staff

Karen Hughes said that the Planning staff is finalizing interim zoning regulations. The Board of County Commissioners will consider the regulations on the 21st of March and will set further public hearings at that time.

11. Communications from Public

John Ormiston, Park Board, said that the comment from the Park Board regarding the proposed Sunnyside Orchard Block 4, Lots 14 & 15, AP Major Subdivision is that they will accept the payment in-lieu of land dedication. He said that parkland dedication is preferable. He said that the land appraisals are much less than what land is really worth. He is concerned that the money they receive from developers is not equal to what the developer will sell the land for. The Park Board now meets the second Tuesday of every month.

12. Communications from the Board

Frankie would like a statement from the Planning Board to the Board of County Commissioners that streamside setbacks should be included somehow in the County Growth Policy. **Karen** noted she was fairly certain that existing language in the Growth Policy would support streamside setbacks. **Ben Hillicoss** asked for a presentation from an individual involved in the project to the Planning Board.

13. New Business

There was none.

14. Old Business

Les asked if it was time to follow up on the request letter that was sent to the Board of County Commissioners to discuss the conservation development option.

15. Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: April 5, 2006 - 7:00 p.m.

- (A) Weed District Presentation by Bryce Christiaens, Supervisor
- (B) Sunnyside Orchards Block 4, Lots 14 & 15, AP (K & L Development) Major Subdivision – Public Hearing
- (C) Silverado Heights (Broadhead Development) Major Subdivision – Plat Evaluation

16. Adjournment

Dan Huls adjourned the meeting at 5:30.